TEXANS NEAR END OF SEARCH FOR GENERAL MANAGER

PAUL, GORDON BLITZ TRAIL BLAZERS SPORTS

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

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NATION

GOP offers $30B plan to open talks on 'Dreamers'

Rep. Michael McCaul of Texas and other top Republicans unveil a $30 billion immigration plan that they hold out as the starting point for negotiations to protect "Dreamers." **Page A8**

Chris Carlson / AP

Immigration agents targeted 7-Eleven stores as lawmakers discuss immigration and border security.

California mudslides death toll rises

Rescue workers search for two dozen people missing after mudslides in Southern California left at least 17 victims dead. **Page A10**

CITY | STATE

Council OKs $37 million recycling deal

Houston residents are set to have their used glass and plastic bags picked up for recycling curbside, but not until next year, under a 20-year $37 million agreement. **Page A3**

BUSINESS

Boat dealers expect local sales increase

Dealers at the Houston Boat Show anticipate stronger local sales this year as oil prices stabilize and buyers look to replace vessels damaged by Harvey. **Page B1**

PREVIEW

Revisiting favorite movies filmed here

Major films shot in Houston tend to stick in the imagination. **Page D1**

'HE IS HOME AT LAST'

Michael Ciaglo photo / Houston Chronicle

Cpt. Jeffery Hauck, left, salutes after presenting the flag that was covering Pfc. Lonnie Eichelberger's coffin to his grandnephew, Cheyenne Eichelberger, during a funeral Wednesday at the Houston National Cemetery. Below, the headstone for Eichelberger, who enlisted at 16.

Killed at 20 during WWII, the remains of a Texan are finally returned more than seven decades later

By Emily Foxhall

The casket sat at the front of the chapel, wrapped with an American flag, containing the remains of a soldier who had died seven decades earlier.

It had taken a long time to find Army Pfc. Lonnie B.C. Eichelberger — who enlisted at age 16 and died in World War II at age 20 — but the military had found him. And now, under a gray Texas sky, he was going to be buried in home soil. Descendants could feel a sense of closure. The mantra of "no soldier left behind" was going to feel true.

Soft music played through the chapel's speakers. Six members of an honor guard from Fort Sam Houston entered, their black shoes shining, their white gloves spotless. They gripped the casket and marched in sync, seven steps to the right and then out to the waiting hearse.

Cheyenne Eichelberger, dressed in a black suit and yellow tie, followed behind. He had never met the man — his great uncle. He hadn't even been born when Lonnie entered the military. But he knew the story. He felt a sense of gratitude and pride.

Soldier continues on A12

2017 home sales break record

Houston housing market thrived despite Harvey

By Nancy Sarnoff

In the weeks after Hurricane Harvey, Danielle Bartz began driving the neighborhoods where she had been shopping for a house before the storm hit.

She made notes of the streets had piles of soaked carpets and wet furniture on the curb, crossing them off her list. Bartz, who works in the mayor's office, even asked the city's flood czar to make sure the house she became interested in had stayed dry.

After checking and double-checking, she made an offer in October on a two-bedroom brick cottage in Eastwood. She moved in Christmas Day.

Bartz, like thousands of other Houstonians in 2017, contributed to what was a record year for the local housing market.

By New Year's Day, buyers had closed on 79,117 single-family homes across the Houston area, representing $23 billion, and besting the previous year's sales record by 3.5 percent, the Houston Association of Realtors reported Wednesday.

The market saw an unexpectedly strong rebound after the August hurricane, as investors snapped up flooded houses to rent or flip, and

Housing continues on A12

OUT OF TIME *Eighth in a series*

From reprieve to indefinite stay

Houston father facing deportation shifts focus to request for asylum

By Olivia P. Tallet

Juan Rodriguez sat Wednesday morning in the lobby of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in Northpoint where the undocumented go to be deported, waiting for — he wasn't exactly sure.

An undocumented Salvadoran, he'd shown up here 25 times over a decade to check in. With a wife and three daughters who are all American citizens, a clean record and a thriving auto repair business, Rodriguez had been granted "prosecutorial discretion" during the Obama administration, which allowed him to remain in the country and legally work. He was proud of being a taxpayer.

But then at his annual visit in February, a month after President Donald Trump took office and embarked on his immigration crackdown, Ro-

Father continues on A13

Marie D. De Jesús / Chronicle

Juan Rodriguez and his daughter Karen are relieved after a change in his immigration case.

» *Read the previous installments of this series.* **HoustonChronicle.com/outoftime**

HISD to standardize start times in 2018-19

Experts say later schedules lead to better academics

By Shelby Webb

First period is always the most difficult for 16-year-old Emma Klingensmith.

The high school sophomore said she typically gets up around 5 a.m. to catch a 6:15 a.m. Metro bus to her campus. When she slinks into her seat by 7:45 a.m., Klingensmith said, it can be hard to keep her eyes open.

"I've dozed off in class more often than I should — probably once a week," said Klingensmith, a student at the Houston Academy for International Studies. "I feel horrible, awful, disgusting. I can't really pay attention."

But next year, Klingensmith and most other Houston ISD high school and middle school students will be able to sleep in. Texas' largest school district announced Wednesday that it was creating uniform start and release times for the vast majority of its schools starting in the 2018-2019 school year.

Elementary schools will start at 7:30 a.m. and will release students at 2:50 p.m.

High and middle schools will begin classes at 8:30

Expert continues on A12

Abrupt loss of Alley leader puts theater on uncertain path

Finding director not easy; local artists urge collaboration

By Cary Darling

The sudden departure of the Alley Theatre's artistic director Gregory Boyd, announced Tuesday and effective Thursday, leaves the most prominent theater in Houston facing an uncertain future.

Not only is the Alley witnessing a new path without the man who, for nearly three decades, guided it to become one of the most respected playhouses in America, it could have a difficult time trying to find a replacement as several notable theaters across the country have similar openings.

"At this point in time, there are more of these jobs open than any time I can remember in 25 years in the field. A few of the most prominent theaters in the country are looking for artistic leadership. Berkeley (Repertory Theatre), ACT (San Francisco), Louisville. It's a long list," said Kevin Moore, managing director of the Cleveland Play House, which co-produced "Freaky Friday" last year with the Alley.

Boyd

"That being said, there's a wealth of talent in this field, too. If you said, 'We only want somebody who has run a theater before,' well then you're limiting your pool. But if you're willing to think in terms of potential and possibility, there are great artists everywhere you look. The Alley is fortunate because there's great structure there on the management side."

Alley administrators, Boyd, 66, and several board members refused to respond to requests for interviews about the surprising departure, which comes

Boyd continues on A13

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